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PARIS FOR ZEYA, LONDON FOR TSOU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/22/2015  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SY](#) [EG](#)  
SUBJECT: SYRIAN PRESIDENT GOES TO EGYPT

Classified By: CDA Kathy Johnson-Casares for reasons 1.4 b/d

¶1. (C) Summary: Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak told visiting Syrian President Bashar al-Asad in a December 20 meeting attended by Arab League Secretary General Amre Moussa that the SARG needed to take immediate steps to ease the worsening relationship with Lebanon, according to an Egyptian diplomat. Mubarak also warned the Syrians that they must cooperate fully with the UN investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese PM Rafik Hariri, encourage the leaders of Palestinian rejectionist groups to lower their public profile in Damascus, and stop foreign fighters from transiting Syria into Iraq, the diplomat said. Asad listened attentively to Mubarak and promised to comply, but it remained to be seen whether the Syrian President would actually heed Mubarak's advice, the diplomat said. Mubarak would rely on Moussa to travel to Syria for a follow-up session within weeks, the diplomat said. End Summary.

¶2. (C) In a December 20 meeting attended by the Egyptian and Syrian foreign ministers and Arab League Secretary General Moussa, Mubarak told Asad that he needed to take immediate steps to ease the worsening relationship with Lebanon, including holding a meeting between high-level Syrian and Lebanese officials, ceasing SARG media attacks against Lebanese officials, and agreeing to demarcate the border between the two countries, according to an Egyptian diplomat. (Mubarak delivered the same message to an advisor of the Lebanese PM and to Lebanese MP Sa'ad Hariri in separate meetings this week, the diplomat noted.) Mubarak also warned the Syrians that they should cooperate fully with the UN investigation into Hariri's death, encourage the leaders of Palestinian rejectionist groups to lower their public profile in Damascus, and stop foreign fighters from transiting Syria into Iraq, the diplomat said.

¶3. (C) Asad listened attentively to Mubarak and promised to comply, but it remained to be seen whether the Syrian President would actually heed Mubarak's advice, the diplomat said. (Note: The December 21 issue of Tishreen newspaper, an official Syrian newspaper, ran an article criticizing Lebanese MP Walid Jumblatt next to a story about the Mubarak-Asad meeting.) Asad protested to Mubarak that the SARG had taken several steps to staunch the flow of foreign fighters to Iraq but had yet to see USG acknowledgment of his efforts, the diplomat said. The presidents also held a brief one-on-one session but did not meet with the press, the diplomat said.

¶4. (C) Mubarak would rely on Moussa to travel to Syria within weeks for a follow-up session, the diplomat said. If the Syrians failed to take Mubarak's advice, the Arab League

would absorb some of the blame, but if the efforts succeeded,  
Egypt would reap the benefits, the diplomat commented.  
JOHNSON-CASARES